

**FIRST 5 CALIFORNIA
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION
October 19, 2006**

**State Capitol, Room 112
Sacramento, CA 95814**

MINUTES

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order

Chairman Ramirez called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Don Attore
Alice Walker Duff
David Kears
Hector Ramirez
Louis Vismara

Commissioner Absent:

Eliseo Medina

Ex-Officio Commissioners Absent:

Scott Himmelstein
Joe Munso

Agenda Item 3 – Chairman's Report

Chairman Ramirez reported that he met his goal to visit every First 5 region in California. He's met with numerous County Commissions observing their activities firsthand, learning more about local priorities and sharing his vision of First 5 California. He thanked everyone who helped him --The Rogers Group who coordinated his visits, State Commission staff, County Commission and First 5 Regions for their hospitality and educating him on their communities. He's proud to be part of First 5 and to see how our dollars are being spent on effective and efficient services. He hopes to do another round of visits again.

Chairman Ramirez reported that the Mobile Outreach Campaign launched its second phase in early September and will offer information and practical tips on ways families can stay healthy in 28 venues in 26 cities across California. During the van's first 12 weeks, First 5 reached more than 30,000 people. Joining forces with local County Commissions and their partners, the Hands-On Health exhibit provided enrollment opportunities in low- or no-cost health insurance, low- or no-cost immunizations, free dental screenings, children's books, backpacks, and/or healthy snacks. Since the launch of Phase I in July 2006, the Hands-On Health van has garnered nearly 5.5 million print impressions and counting. He thanked the edutainers, The Rogers Group and everyone else involved with the van for its success. He encouraged everyone to visit the van.

Chairman Ramirez reported that he participated in signing of AB 172 (Chan, Chapter 211, Statutes of 2006), which established a \$50 million preschool and family literacy program, and looks forward to First 5 California being active participants in implementing the measure.

Chairman Ramirez announced that he and the mobile van will participate in “Festival de la Gente,” the nation’s largest Day of the Dead celebration, in Los Angeles on October 28. The family-oriented event is expected to attract more than 70,000 people. Commissioner Walker Duff will also participate.

Commissioner Vismara asked that efforts be made to schedule the van to appear at the State Capitol after January when the Legislature reconvenes.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Agenda Item 4 – Executive Director’s Report

First 5 California Executive Director Kris Perry reviewed the Commission’s agenda for the day and announced that the First 5 Highlights video (Item 11) was still in development and would not be viewed at the meeting. She reported activities on the following:

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Staff Update

Ms. Perry thanked Chief Deputy Director Jeri Dale and Terry Miller, Chief of Administrative Services, and other staff for their efforts in hiring 11 new staff (Terry Miller, LoriAnn Sasano, William Madison, Lisa Tate, Camille Smith, Kimberly Fedyna, William Watts, Travis Percival, Ryan Digman, Blake Jackson and Katrina Davis). She also bid farewell to Don Taylor, who recently accepted a position with the Department of Education, Gwen Atkins who transferred to the Bureau of State Audits and Barbara Marquez who recently left to work on Proposition 63 (the Mental Health Services Act) at the Department of Mental Health.

Audit Update

Ms. Perry announced that First 5 California staff have been working with the Bureau of State Audits for approximately six months. She commended her staff for their efforts in responding to continuous requests for information during the audit and noted that public requests for information are likely to continue in the wake of the report’s release, set for October 31.

The Department of Finance is currently conducting its annual financial audit of the State Commission.

Office Move

Ms. Perry announced that the State Commission is scheduled to move on November 13 to 2389 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 260, Sacramento, CA 95825.

PROGRAM AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Health Access for All Children

Discussion of First 5's Health Access for All Children initiative is postponed pending the outcome of Proposition 86, a tobacco tax ballot initiative that would backfill Proposition 10 and fund health programs, smoking cessation and childrens' health insurance.

Migrant Education Even Start (MEES)

Program is undergoing an evaluation and Commission staff hope to bring a report on the program in early 2007.

School Readiness (SR)

First 5 California staff worked very hard with county representatives on the best way to get SR funds out to counties as quickly as possible. A policy change will be proposed later in the meeting to expedite the use of these funds.

Technical Assistance (TA)

First 5 California staff are working with County Commissions and technical assistance supporters to develop a process for releasing regional TA funds in a manner that is timely and meets all state contracting requirements. We hope to issue an RFP in November.

Equity and Diversity

First 5 California staff is collaborating with regional partners to develop plans to implement the priorities identified in the Diversity and Equity Operational Plan – early literacy and language and sustaining the service infrastructure for young children and families. We will work with First 5 California's Equity Principles Subcommittee as needed.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Statewide Research & Evaluation Contractor Litigation

Sacramento County Superior Court upheld the Department of General Services' decision to void the award of the State Commission research and evaluation contract to Westat. Staff will now review, revise, and reissue one or more request for proposals (RFPs) for statewide research and evaluation services. Terry Miller will oversee the RFP and contracting process. The joint State Commission-Association Evaluation Workgroup will discuss options at its meeting on October 24.

The internet-based geographic information system, developed and overseen by Don Taylor who is departing, is being revised to include multi-year annual census data to allow users to track changes over time and an upload and geo-code function to enable users to enter their own site data.

Ms. Perry thanked the 42 County Commissions that have already submitted their annual reports, even though the legal deadline for submission is not until November.

LEGISLATION AND ADVOCACY

Collaboration with Governor's Office and Administration

Efforts are underway to implement AB 172 (Chan, Chapter 211, Statutes of 2006). Ms. Perry and Commission Walker Duff met with the Secretary of Education and members of the Governor's Administration to talk about their plans to fund preschool in the next fiscal year. She anticipates that First 5 California can provide useful evaluation data to them.

Chairman Ramirez and Ms. Perry were guest speakers last month at the Child Development Policy Institute conference entitled "What is Next for Preschool?" More than 300 leaders were in attendance.

Obesity

The childhood obesity and prevention campaign continues and will air ads in early December. First 5 California is partnering with its public relations contractor, The Rogers Group, and the Health and Human Services Agency to expand public education and outreach efforts on this rising health concern into new areas.

Media and Communications

The Early Child Education (ECE) Workforce Study, funded by First 5 California and conducted by Marcy Whitebook at UC Berkeley, has been widely distributed. No more than 10% of the persons working in the ECE field are under the age of 30. The First 5 CARES project is helping to remedy this problem.

Univision aired four First 5 segments in Sacramento, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Fresno on the mobile outreach campaign, school readiness, and the benefits of breastfeeding. The segments reached nearly 120,000 viewers for an approximate ad value of \$23, 000. Ms. Perry thanked Communications Deputy Director Elisa Bupara for her hard work on this.

A new outreach campaign has been launched in the African American community-- the Leading Ladies for School Readiness. Women leaders in churches and community groups will receive a variety of ready-to-use school readiness outreach materials to assist in reaching families in their communities. Nearly 50 women statewide are participating in the program.

The next round of paid advertising will begin December 4 in all markets and run for 12 weeks, with the exception of outdoor advertising, which will run for 6 months. Existing ads on pediatric obesity and preschool will be used, with one new TV ad to be produced in Spanish.

Statewide Partnership Program Project Update

At the July Commission meeting, The Rogers Group, Community Partners and the Children's Partnership presented the plan to identify and select organizations to be part of the Statewide Partnership Program. The process continues to move forward. The subcontractors are making every effort to expedite the process. However, in light of additional contracting reporting requirements, community-based organizations (CBOs) have to be briefed on our new administrative criteria. Once all the CBOs have been

briefed and agree to these terms, the statewide program partners can finalize their decisions. Ms. Perry thanked Sherry Novick, Harry Freedman, Lin Batten and everyone else in the Association who provided input into the process to help First 5 California to be aware and responsive as possible in developing the agreements. The final decisions will be transmitted to First 5 California.

Ms. Perry commended the following First 5 Commissions in Sacramento, Monterey, Inyo and Santa Cruz counties for their recent community outreach activities. Over the last three months, more than a dozen County Commissions on average incorporated monthly materials in English and Spanish into their media outreach on topics including school readiness, immunizations and baby safety.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Agenda Item 5 – First 5 Association of California Report

First 5 Association of California (Association) Executive Director Sherry Novick reported on the following activities:

The Association received a \$1.3 million federal AmeriCorps grant that will fund 156 First 5 Service Corps members to serve in School Readiness Projects in approximately 20 counties. The effort begun three years ago as a partnership between First 5 California, the California Children and Families Foundation, and the Governor's Office of Service and Volunteerism. Service Corps members work in a variety of school readiness activities and most are from the communities in which they work so the project is able to build leadership and community capacity while it serves children.

The Association has begun conversations with the Proposition (Prop.) 63 Oversight and Accountability Commission and its Prevention and Early Intervention Committee with the goal of supporting the relationship between county-level First 5 early mental health efforts and local Prop. 63-mandated planning.

County Supervisors, who are also First 5 Commissioners, will be meeting on November 29 during the annual California State Association of Counties (CSAC) conference in Anaheim, at a convening hosted by the Orange County Children and Families Commission.

The Association is communicating with the Department of Health Services about future joint work on obesity and nutrition, with the eventual possibility of USDA funding to support that work. The Association may serve as master contractor and several counties can participate.

The Bay Area Region recently submitted an application for funding to the California Endowment to fund a multi-county early mental health planning process designed to identify barriers to a comprehensive system of care. They hope to develop recommendations for the Legislature and others on ways to maximize funds.

The Southern Region is planning a results conference on what results First 5 is getting from its investments and how those results can best be communicated to stakeholders and the public.

The Northeast Region is developing a technical assistance (TA) process to enhance local evaluation efforts consistent with the new framework and Central Region is developing a train the trainer program focused on pediatricians to do developmental screenings in their offices.

The Association is working to identify who the new legislators will be in order to begin educating the Legislature about First 5 and how the programs serve their constituents and priorities.

Commissioner Vismara asked if there's been any thought about the career ladder of AmeriCorps volunteers in early childhood education. Ms. Novick explained that First 5 Association developed curriculum that can be used by local colleges, if they have funding. Commissioner Vismara mentioned that \$30 million had been given to community colleges and universities to provide grants to address the nursing shortage.

Commissioner Vismara commented regarding the Prop. 63 Commission's potential partnerships in the area of early childhood developmental screening for mental health and other issues. Commissioner Kears said that they targeted three areas, including early identification, assessment and prompt intervention for 0-5, with the goal to share information between service providers. There's been interest in Prop. 63 to at stateside level to make sure 0-5 population is represented. Ms. Novick mentioned that she and Ms. Perry will meet with the executive director of the Prop. 63 Commission in the next couple of weeks.

Commissioner Walker Duff commented that educating the new legislators about First 5 and our work is a great opportunity for First 5 California and the counties to work together.

Chairman Ramirez asked if the Association has looked at the workforce centers to be partners. Ms. Novick will make the suggestion to counties if they are not already doing so.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Agenda Item 6 – Legislative Update

Legislative Director Tina Chiginsky reported that Governor Schwarzenegger signed or vetoed the final bills of the 2005-06 legislative session on September 30.

Nearly 1,200 (1,172) bills were sent to the Governor this year alone. He signed 910 measures and vetoed 262. First 5 California tracked 244 bills over the two-year session and the State Commission took positions on 15. Staff are working on First 5 California's comprehensive legislative summary for 2005-06 and will send it to State Commissioners and post it on the First 5 California Web site as soon as it is finalized.

First 5 California is pleased that the Governor signed bills that First 5 California considered a priority. Some of the new laws will increase prenatal screening for birth defects, increase children's access to health care services and expand preschool opportunities in California. Staff will explore the potential role of First 5 California in implementation of some of the bills and report back in January.

First 5 California may consider sponsoring legislation in the coming year depending on the outcome of our Strategic Plan and legislative priorities and the State Auditor's Report.

More than one-third of the Legislature will term out this fall -- the highest figure since voters enacted term limits in 1990. Ms. Perry and Ms. Chiginsky will be meeting with new legislators and their staff once they are on board to let them know about First 5 California and how our programs benefit their constituents.

In the way of legislative leadership, Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez has announced some key chairmanships in the Assembly:

- Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally (Compton) now chairs the Health Committee,
- Mark Leno (San Francisco) chairs Appropriations,
- Gene Mullin chairs Education (San Francisco) and
- Patty Berg (Eureka) will head the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services.

Senator Perata has not yet made changes to Senate committees.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Agenda Item 7 – Consent Calendar

The Commission considered approval of the consent agenda items:

1. The July 20, 2006, Commission Meeting Minutes.
2. Confirmation that the KCET contract and activities will be reviewed in the Commission's Media and Public Relations Subcommittee.
3. Approve an amendment to extend and augment the interagency agreement with the California Department of Education (CDE) for consultation on legislative issues. Tina Chiginsky serves in this position.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Kears moved to approve Consent Calendar Items 1, 2 and 3. Commissioner Walker Duff seconded the motion and Commissioners Ramirez, Walker Duff, Kears and Attore approved it. Commissioner Vismara was absent.

Item 8 – Organizational Development Update

Ms. Perry reviewed work accomplishments by Commission staff since she assumed her position as First 5 California's Executive Director 15 months ago in the following key program and administrative areas: Communications, Research and Evaluation,

Program Management, Administration and Organizational Redesign, Future Technology Activities, and Legislative and Governmental Affairs. Ms. Perry commended First 5 California staff for the extraordinary job they have done to manage their work while undergoing tremendous administrative and policy changes, and told Commissioners that they will see evidence of other activities in response to the Bureau of State Audits Report.

Terry Miller, Chief of Administrative Services, described the role of her position and staff as is to be part of the team ensuring the efficient distribution of funds and to verify and document the fiscal transactions of the Commission, while maintaining full compliance with all state and regulatory mandates. She highlighted the following administrative changes at the State Commission:

Selection and hire of three key management positions in the past two months:

Chief Deputy Director (Jerri Dale), Chief of Administrative Services, and Director Administrator of School Readiness Partnerships (Yvette Rowlett). Ms. Miller reported that the First 5 California received final approval from state control agencies to recruit and hire a Chief Legal Counsel. The examination plan is in progress.

Policies and Procedures Development: Revisions to the First 5 California Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual included the restructuring of the organization of the manual and development of policies. Terry Miller reviewed several of the policy component areas that have been developed and the types of policy under development necessary to ensure compliance with governing laws and regulations. Included in the policy development activities is a First 5 California Proceedings Manual and a standardized format for presenting contract information to First 5 California.

Internal Operations Improvements:

- Commission staff took proactive steps to identify opportunities to consolidate functions to increase the efficiency of operations and maximize staff resource support. These opportunities included work to build integrated teams to support partnerships between program, research, and administration to strengthen the services to the local commissions, contractors, and the general public.
- Commission staff are actively engaged in a comprehensive training plan to strengthen the support of procurement and contract management work.
- The impending office move provides opportunities to relocate staff to promote effective communications and support the integration of teamwork.

Management Systems Improvements:

- Work has been completed to increase the security of commission data.
- Planned upgrades to the technology used to support the work of the Commission staff will result in more efficient tracking of key projects and ongoing workload (e.g., contracts, training, disbursements, etc.).
- A master calendar has been created to ensure motions required annually are appropriately calendared on the Commissioner's Meeting Agendas.

Funding Allocation and Distribution System Overview and First Level Implementation:

Ms. Miller provided diagrams representing a high-level overview of First 5 California's funding allocation and distribution system, and the variety of methods available to contract for services and appropriate funding for purposes approved by First 5 California. Ms. Perry noted that the new staffing structure is designed to ensure that First 5 California can account for every dollar for which it is responsible, which will require staff to have both fiscal and programmatic sensibility.

Commissioner Walker Duff commended staff for doing a very large amount of work under extremely difficult circumstances. Commissioner Kears applauded the direction state staff have been going in with more structured organization.

Commissioner Vismara asked if staff are looking at how things are done. He suggested that First 5 California, at a future meeting, look at what is being done by the administrative staff in terms of requirements and appropriate responsibilities to determine if certain functions can be outsourced or if we can partner with other entities so that they are done in a more effective and efficient manner. He gave an example that a large part of the First 5 California's budget goes to research. He asked that, as First 5 California moves forward with its reorganization, it identify things that staff can do in a different manner, like outsourcing.

Ms. Perry responded that, given the 1% cap on administrative costs, First 5 California is doing everything it can in-house. A higher percentage is assigned to an activity like media or research. First 5 California is forced to contract out a high number of dollars and it is limited in the amount that can be spent on administration. Until those percentages are changed in state law, First 5 California is structured in the best way it can be to manage contracts of the size and scope that are needed.

Chairman Ramirez explained that when he first joined First 5, he asked Ms. Perry to look at all staff positions and the Commission's infrastructure and reevaluate if it is the most efficient and effective way to manage the Commission. She has been doing that and bringing in outstanding staff. Ms. Perry assured the Commission that the new organizational structure will ensure that First 5 California will be responsible for every dollar that is released, be clearer on expectations, and have a balanced approach between fiscal and programmatic sensibility. Since First 5 California primarily funds others we must have strong programmatic and financial skills. Staff are looking to persons who can handle both sets of responsibilities. Ms. Perry said that the activities, finances, staff and the strategic plan are all aligning appropriately.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Item 9 – Strategic Plan Extension

Ms. Perry presented the Commission with a resolution to ratify the 2005 and 2006 Strategic Plan updates, to extend the fiscal years 2003-06 First 5 California Strategic Plan to June 30, 2007, and to change the annual approval to a fiscal year review period. This will enable the commission to go forth with its new strategic planning process and not work without a strategic plan in place.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Attore moved to adopt the Resolution to approve the 2005 and 2006 Strategic Plan updates, extend the fiscal years 2003-06 First 5 California Strategic Plan to June 30, 2007, and change the annual review to a fiscal year review period. Commissioner Kears seconded and the motion was approved with Commissioners Attore, Kears, Medina, Ramirez and Walker Duff voting yes, and Commissioner Vismara voting no.

Ms. Perry announced that the State Commission will be working on the new Strategic Plan process at the January 25-26, 2007, Commission meeting in Sacramento.

Item 10 – Strategic Planning Process

Ms. Perry explained that the contractor who is going to assist the State Commission with its strategic planning process could not attend the First 5 California meeting because his contract is not fully executed. The proposed contractor, Dr. Alan Glassman, is a professor of Management and the Director of the Center for Management and Organizational Development at California State University, Northridge. Ms. Perry described his qualifications and experience. She explained that once the contract is approved, First 5 California may choose to hold a meeting in November or December to begin the strategic planning process.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Item 11 – First 5 California Highlights

Chairman Ramirez announced that the First 5 California Highlights video is still being developed and will be seen at a future First 5 California meeting.

Item 12 – First 5 California Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2006-07

Patricia Skelton, Ph.D., Deputy Director for Research and Evaluation, presented Commissioners with recommendations for updating the First 5 California Guidelines for 2006-2007. The California Children and Families Act, Health and Safety Code Section 130125 (b), requires First 5 California to adopt guidelines for the development of “an integrated and comprehensive statewide program of promoting, supporting, and improving early childhood development that enhances the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of children in California.” The Act also requires that First 5 California review the Guidelines each year. First 5 California’s research and evaluation staff reviewed and revised the Guidelines document to reflect and align with the progress of First 5, current resource information, the new Research and Evaluation Framework and the Financial Management Guide. The revised Guidelines will be posted on the First 5 California Web site.

Commissioner Walker Duff requested that revisions and formatting make navigation through the document easier and provide conclusions up front. Dr. Skelton said that the Guidelines will be user friendly.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Kears moved to approve the presented revisions and updates to First 5 California's Guidelines for fiscal year 2006-07. Commissioner Walker Duff seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved it.

Item 13 – Statewide Evaluation Data Fiscal Year 2002-05

Dr. Skelton presented First 5 California with an analysis of three years of data from the statewide evaluation for fiscal years 2002 through 2005. The analysis focused on trends and changes in who First 5 is serving, the types of services being provided with funding from First 5, who are providing these services, and family and child outcomes. Highlights of the data show positive outcomes in all four result areas: improved health, improved child development, improved family functioning, and system change.

Commissioner Attore commended First 5 California staff on their work. He suggested that First 5 California plan to disseminate the information now to the Legislature and public through the press, briefings and individual presentations. Ms. Perry explained that plans are underway for her, Chairman Ramirez and Ms. Chiginsky to meet with Legislators and legislative staff soon. Commissioners Attore and Vismara offered to assist with visits.

Commissioner Kears asked if there are any areas of concern or if the data showed that we should be looking at something more carefully. For example, are there some populations that are not being served or are there areas where, despite First 5's efforts, disparities persist. Barriers can be different for different populations. We should use data to identify what we need to look at and what we can be doing differently. Such analysis lends credibility to our work and would help instruct the Legislature on what needs to be done. If the data can be differentiated and if better outcomes are identified in certain geographic areas, it may point to models that work.

Commissioner Walker Duff said that the data provides true accountability. The data can be analyzed and used to point out what First 5 California and County Commissions have done well or not well, and what has yet to be done. She recommends that the Commission analyze the data when it prepares its Strategic Plan. Commissioner Walker Duff expressed her disappointment in that the data shows that the most needy are not being served -- African Americans represent the majority of children in need. She said that the data would be a tool to improve services for young children.

Chairman Ramirez said that it is good we have the data now and can do comparison analysis, identify trends and use the research to drive our decision making so that we can make the best decisions and best use our resources.

Dr. Skelton explained that the Center for Results and County Commission reports would focus on more in depth analysis of these areas.

Commissioner Attore suggested that First 5 California present this information in a comprehensive way, beyond a brief presentation, to various groups working with children throughout the state. The data can help recruit natural partners to help serve young children.

Commission Vismara asked what services were qualified as “intensively served.” Dr. Skelton explained that “intensively served” refers to the duration and depth of services (e.g., direct services to the child or family provided multiple times over a period of three weeks or more).

PUBLIC COMMENT: Donna Spiker, SRI, said that the Legislature needs to hear that First 5 data is comprehensive. Case studies have identified promising models. Children entering kindergarten in low performing schools have delayed early literacy skills. Some counties are doing innovative early literacy programs.

Item 14 – 2007 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) Funding

Dr. Skelton presented First 5 California with a proposal to enter into an interagency agreement with University of the California, Los Angeles’ Center for Healthier Children to provide fiscal support of CHIS 2007. The CHIS research provides an opportunity to leverage First 5 California research funds by partnering with other state agencies and private foundations. Like CHIS 2001, 2003, and 2005, CHIS 2007 is a comprehensive population-based survey that collects data on family, school/peer, and individual factors associated with young children’s health and development.

CHIS collects data on indicators of health outcomes (to include an expanded oral health section), health access, health and developmental risks (to include childcare, children with disabilities/special needs and social/emotional), and health promoting behaviors that are associated with differences in the economic characteristics of the child’s family, ethnicity, place of residence and where relevant to characteristics like insurance coverage. The study report will identify disparities across population groups (0-5 year olds) that are attributable to differences in these characteristics. In addition, CHIS provides the opportunity for First 5 California to add additional questions, at a fraction of the cost it would take to survey parents independently, which would provide meaningful data about the distribution and extent of use of the *Kit for New Parents*, impact of *Health Access*, and also questions about our media campaign.

Commissioner Kears recommended that First 5 California focus its supplemental questions on areas in which our data show problems (e.g., where we’re not reaching some populations or where populations are underserved).

Commissioner Vismara commented that the CHIS study compared data from 13,000 families from 2001 to 2005 and showed that the incidence of autism had increased by 250 percent in California. The data indicated 36,000 children between the ages of 3 and 11 have autism in the state. He urged the Commission to use the CHIS to further study the incidence of autism and other developmental disabilities in children.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Attore moved to approve First 5 California’s participation in and funding support, not to exceed \$1.5 million, for the 2007 California Health Interview Survey to be conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles, Center for Healthier Children. Commissioner Walker Duff seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved it.

Item 15 – School Readiness Program Policy Change

School Readiness Partnerships Director Administrator Yvette Rowlett proposed a request to allow First 5 County Commissions participating in the School Readiness (SR) Program to use unspent funds from Cycle 1 during Cycle 2 effective immediately. The county First 5 SR programs may propose use of these funds as needed within the SR request for funding (RFF) guidelines and policies. However, at the close of Cycle 2, the funds from Cycle 1 and 2 will no longer be available to county commissions. First 5 California will retain unspent allocations for use at First 5 California's discretion.

Commissioner Vismara asked if these funds would be required to be matched by County Commissions. Ms. Rowlett responded that the School Readiness RFF requires these funds to be matched, dollar for dollar.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Walker Duff moved to approve spending authority to provide County Commissions access to unspent Cycle 1 SR Program allocations during Cycle 2. Cycle 1 funds may be used as needed within the established SR guidelines and policies. At the close of Cycle 2, the unspent funds from Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 will no longer be available to County Commissions but will revert to First 5 California to be used at First 5 California's discretion. Commissioner Kears seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved it.

Item 16 – Special Needs Project Update

Special Needs Project Manager Debra Merchant presented highlights of *Year 1 Evaluation Findings* for the First 5 California Special Needs Project (SNP), which was approved in 2003 for \$20 million over five years to support children with disabilities and other special needs and early childhood mental health. She introduced Donna Spiker and Craig Zercher, SRI International, who serve on the SNP evaluation team, and recognized the California Institute for Human Services, Sonoma State University, as the Coordination and Training contractor.

Ms. Merchant explained that the SNP's goal is to strengthen the School Readiness Program and other First 5 programs by demonstrating and disseminating effective practices for programs and systems serving young children with disabilities and other special needs. The project emphasizes universal access to screening for early identification, diagnoses and referrals, improved access to and utilization of services and supports, inclusion of young children with disabilities, and evaluation to identify effective programs and any needed changes.

Ms. Merchant provided demographic information from the 10 demonstration sites, listed the accomplishments and challenges that have occurred since project implementation, and described various strategies that are being utilized to enhance the system of support for children with disabilities and other special needs. She also recommended the following next steps for SNP:

- develop or enhance clear goals and monitoring systems at each site for the developmental screening and referral system;
- utilize data reports and other monitoring tools effectively to guide outreach and services for underserved client groups;
- develop clear policies and procedures for parent/family involvement;
- enhance screening and service systems by expanding community partnerships;
- further develop and carry out site implementation plans, project performance indicators, and training and technical assistance plans; and
- continue a focus on sustainability and dissemination among First 5 projects and communities through training and coordination.

Commissioner Kears asked if there is data on the outcome for children who have been identified as having special needs (i.e., what follow-up and intervention services did they receive?) Ms. Merchant explained that each SNP demonstration site identified children's needs and gaps in services, and developed an implementation plan to make progress in that area. Commissioner Kears asked that staff identify the best practices, particularly in the area of mental health and identifying funding barriers. Ms. Merchant explained that SNP is developing a resource guide to implementation that will identify ways to enhance the system of support. The guide will be posted on the SNP Web site.

Commissioner Walker Duff urged the Commission to disseminate SNP evaluation findings to show the importance of identifying special needs, the complexity of serving children with special needs and relative budget issues. Since First 5 California is screening more children and systematically beginning interventions earlier, costs will go up initially but save money in the long run.

Commissioner Vismara commented that the mental health needs of children should be addressed at a younger age to prevent future developmental and behavior problems. Ms. Merchant explained that the evaluation identified risk factors including health issues, family relationships and social-emotional needs. Seventeen percent of the children screened had some developmental concern. Commissioner Vismara suggested that the SNP evaluate if the current health system is providing children with the appropriate developmental assessments and identifying those who have special needs. He recommended looking at 17 percent of the population to see if they had any previous CHDP or other screenings.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

Item 17– Prenatal to 3

School Readiness Partnerships Director Yvette Rowlett reminded the State Commission that presentations on current prenatal to three practices and recommendations for the future were requested at the 2006 Commission meetings. At the July 2006 Commission meeting, Cindy Oser, Director of Zero to Three's Western Office presented an overview of the developmental and economic importance of providing services for children ages zero to three. Ms. Rowlett explained that the second part of the presentation was to be given at this meeting. An overview of prenatal to three practices from local First 5 Commissions would be shared. First 5 California and the First 5 Association of

California partnered to give the presentation to the Commission and to explore the recommendations for prenatal to three services through the workgroup that the Association has convened.

Ms. Rowlett introduced Moira Kenney, Ph.D., Statewide Program Director at the First 5 Association of California and former Executive Director for First 5 San Francisco. Dr. Kenney presented the efforts of 15 local commissions in providing effective prenatal to three programs. Dr. Kenney presented the following key approaches and strategies as a sample of those provided across the state:

- Enhanced Home Visiting Nurse-Led Models are provided in Alameda, Santa Barbara and Napa counties. Increase in breastfeeding, home literacy activities, and well-baby pediatric visits are some of the results.
- Home Visiting Paraprofessional Models are provided in Santa Clara, Amador, Orange, and Sonoma counties. Increases in child safety, parenting skills, and positive behaviors are some of the results.
- High-Risk Pregnancy Support programs are provided in Sonoma, Solano and San Bernardino counties. Increase in screenings for alcohol and drug use and lowered pre-term delivery rates are some of the successes.
- Neonatal Health Programs, which support families with high-risk infants, are in place in Alameda and San Diego counties. Some successes include increase in breastfeeding despite long hospitalizations and health services and referrals provided.
- An Enhanced Pediatric Care Program is provided in Fresno County. Pediatric residents from University of California Fresno participate in this program that increases pediatric capacity by providing an on-site developmental specialist. 220 babies are served per year, and the entire Central Valley has indicated an interest in participating in this program.
- Parent-Child Bonding Programs are provided in Shasta and Alameda counties. Shasta has documented results that show decreased maternal depression and parent stress with an increase in parent-child interactions. Alameda has extended teen pregnancy programs to parenting programs that continue support after birth, and have documented results that 52 percent of participants remained in school or graduated.
- Calaveras, Napa, and Santa Cruz counties have effective Nutrition Programs in place. Calaveras has a harvest project that is nationally identified by WIC as a model program and Napa has a pregnancy support program for women with Type 2 diabetes. Santa Cruz provides breastfeeding support for Latina women and has doubled breastfeeding rates among participants.

Ms. Kenney concluded by indicating that the next steps for local commissions are to engage in local and regional efforts to coordinate prenatal to three efforts, expand leveraging, and develop perinatal systems of care as discussed by First 5 Los Angeles' Baby Zones Project at the Association retreat in August 2006.

Commissioner Vismara asked that, as First 5 California moves forward, the issues associated with normal and abnormal brain development be highlighted in the Strategic Plan for 0-3.

Chairman Ramirez commented that the information needed to be shared with the public and with the incoming legislators to show that early intervention can save the state future health care costs. Dr. Kenney offered to provide First 5 California staff with First 5 Solano County's annual evaluation that includes a cost benefit analysis of the services they provide.

Commissioner Walker Duff asked that the 0 to 3 data be presented in a way that tracks how other First 5 programs work together.

Commissioner Attore recommended that First 5 California summarize information from the SNP and Prenatal to 3 presentations into a concise and strategic briefing for constituent groups and the Legislature. Commissioner Walker Duff recommended that the presentation highlight all the work that First 5 does. Commissioner Vismara suggested that presentation include ideas for proposed legislation and offered his assistance to gather key legislative staff to listen to the needs identified by First 5 California.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Sherry Novick commented that although the programs highlighted in Dr. Kenney's Prenatal to 3 presentation are clearly linked to First 5 California initiatives, they grew from local needs assessments, are funded locally and are not part of First 5 California initiatives. She requested that the First 5 California strategic planning process preserve the linkage between state and county commission programs and that new initiatives do not ignore the progress made at the local level. Commissioner Kears agreed that any presentation made about First 5 should stress the partnership between the state and local commissions.

CLOSED SESSION – Chairman Ramirez excused the audience from the room.

Item 18 – Government Code § 11126(a)(1), Performance Evaluation: Executive Director

Item 19 – Government Code § 11126(e)(B)(1), Pending Litigation

Item 20 -- Government Code § 11126(a)(1), Complaint Against Public Employee

Item 21 -- Government Code § 11126(e)(2)(B)(i), Pending Litigation

Item 22 -- Government Code § 11126.2, Audit Response

END OF CLOSED SESSION

Item 23 -- Contract Ratification

Ms. Perry requested that the Commission vote to approve a resolution, which would ratify all contracts awarded, entered into and amended prior to the passage of the resolution.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION: Commissioner Kears moved to adopt the resolution to ratify the contracts entered into or amended by the Executive Director, or his or her designee.

Commissioner Walker Duff abstained from voting to approve six contracts (contract numbers 6760, 6852, 6860, 6916, 6950, and 7008) and any amendments to those contracts. Commissioner Kears moved to approve all the items except those referenced by Commissioner Walker Duff. Commissioner Attore seconded the motion and Commissioners Ramirez, Kears, Attore, and Walker Duff approved it. Commissioner Vismara was absent.

Commissioner Kears moved to approve the remaining items on the contract list. Commissioner Attore seconded the motion and Commissioners Ramirez, Kears, Attore, and Vismara approved it. Commissioner Walker Duff abstained.

CLOSED SESSION – Chairman Ramirez excused the audience from the room.

END OF CLOSED SESSION

Item 24 – Adjournment

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m. The next scheduled Commission meeting is January 25-26, 2007 in Sacramento.